

PUBLIC OUTREACH REVIEW
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ASSESSMENT

A proposal

The Task Force has developed ecosystem restoration goals and strategies as documented in *Coordinating Success, July 2000*. Public engagement has been addressed in a broad based “Connecting Strategy” and an approved “Public Outreach and Participation Strategy,” both of which emphasize opportunities for improved coordination among individual member organization’s programs. This proposal calls for a six-month effort, starting in October 2000, to assess the Working Group role in public engagement.

CHALLENGE: While the Working Group’s Public Outreach Steering and Support Team (POSST) has developed plans for public outreach coordination, it has been difficult to engage agency representation on a sustained basis. Accordingly, the Working Group agreed to review public outreach expectations, priorities and roles with the Task Force and to redesign its public outreach committee to maximize participation and shared leadership among Task Force agencies. The following actions are proposed to serve these ends.

WORKING GROUP REVIEW: At the October Working Group meeting a two hour facilitated discussion will be held to identify preferences and ideas regarding public outreach. The discussion would address such questions as the following: What information about ecosystem restoration should be shared with the public? In what ways should the public be involved in ecosystem restoration planning or development? Who is responsible for these activities? What is the role of the Task Force? What are the most important things the Task Force should do in the next year to promote public outreach?

TASK FORCE REVIEW: The results of the Working Group Review should be shared with the Task Force and discussed at its next meeting after October. The Task Force should determine points of agreement or disagreement with the Working Group and add any additional suggestions. In particular, the Task Force should clarify expectations and mutual commitments for agency involvement in working together on public outreach issues.

PUBLIC OUTREACH CONFERENCE: During the past year, the POSST has been involved in planning a conference for public outreach professionals from agencies involved in ecosystem restoration. The Working Group has agreed that this meeting should be held. It is proposed that the conference be held following the public outreach reviews of the Working Group and Task Force. The conference should provide an opportunity to build upon the guidance of the Working Group and Task Force. An outcome of the conference would be a plan developed by participants indicating how they will strengthen their cooperation in public outreach activities in the future including ways of redesigning or replacing the POSST.

WORKING GROUP ACTION: The Working Group will review the results of the Public Outreach conference. It will then take whatever action is necessary in redesigning its committee structure to support public outreach efforts going forward.